

# The Megiddo Message

*Devoted to the Cause of Christ*

MELCHISEDEC—Who Is He?

NOT ABOVE YOUR BUSINESS

THE PICTURE AHEAD

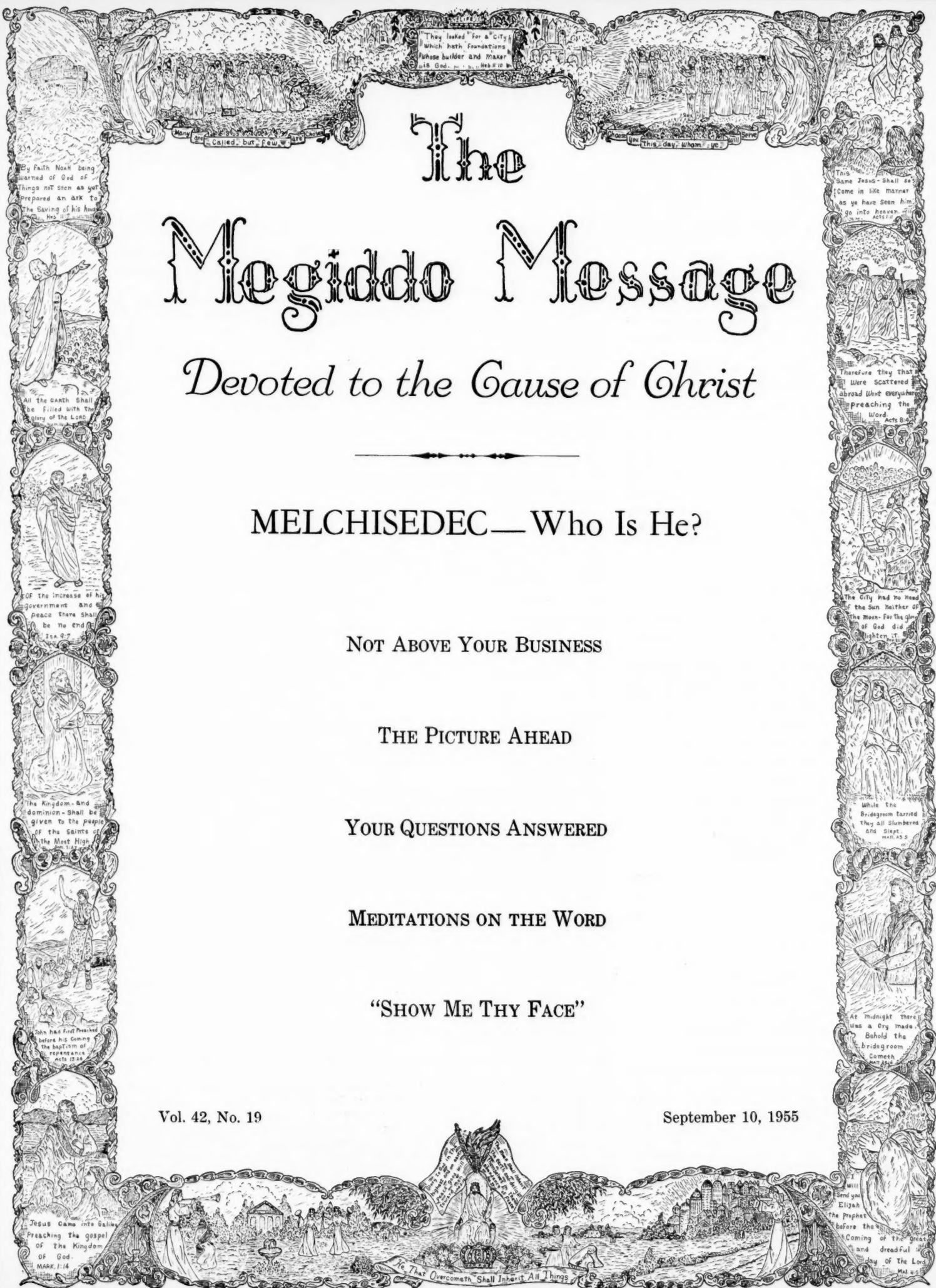
YOUR QUESTIONS ANSWERED

MEDITATIONS ON THE WORD

"SHOW ME THY FACE"

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# THE MEGIDDO MESSAGE

DEVOTED TO THE CAUSE OF CHRIST

Percy J. Thatcher, Editor

September 10, 1955

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## MELCHISEDEC — Who Is He?

### *How May We Understand the Wisdom of God?*

**I**S MELCHISEDEC in the world today, seeing he is King of righteousness and King of peace; without father, without mother, without descent, having neither beginning of days, nor end of life? If you can explain this subject to me so that I can explain it to others, it will be a great relief," is a typical request.

We can assure our readers that Melchisedec still lives, is here, and that without Him we mortals should be in a helpless condition.

Seeing that the Apostle Paul is the only inspired writer who gives any description of Melchisedec, it will be profitable to study some of the rules given by him in the Word. First let us read in II Peter 3:15, 16 what the Apostle Peter has to say in reference to Paul's writings. He here tells us that the "longsuffering of our Lord is salvation; even as our beloved brother Paul also according to the wisdom given unto him hath written unto you; as also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are *some things hard to be understood*, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other Scriptures, unto their own destruction."

Here we learn that the Apostle Paul possessed great stores of heavenly wisdom, also that his writings contain some of the deep wisdom of God which is not on the surface but which requires study in order to be understood. He elaborates this thought more fully in I Cor. 2:4-13, where he states that his "preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power: that your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God. Howbeit we speak wisdom among them that are perfect: yet not the wisdom of this world, nor of the princes of this world, that come to naught: but we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God hath ordained before the world unto our glory: which none of the princes of this world knew: for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. . . . But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: . . . which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but that which the Holy Spirit teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual."

Unskilled expositors of the Word are always comparing natural with natural, which is the very reason that the princes and wise men of earth fail to understand the knowledge of God. It is most important to the student of the Scriptures to understand that personification is used frequently in the Bible.

#### Truth is Personified, Termed Wisdom

This we learn by "comparing spiritual things with spiritual." The entire 8th chapter of Proverbs is an outstanding example of personification. "Wisdom" is said to be speaking. "Doth not wisdom cry? and understanding put forth *her* voice? *She* standeth in the top of high places, by the way in the places of the paths. . . . Unto you, O men, *I* call; and *my* voice is to the sons of men."

Yes, Wisdom is calling today; calling, calling yet, to

everyone who will give a listening ear and turn from the path of folly.

"Hear; for *I* will speak of excellent things; and the opening of *my* lips shall be right things. For *my* mouth shall speak truth; and wickedness is an abomination to *my* lips. All the words of *my* mouth are in righteousness; there is nothing froward or perverse in them."

How true! This wondrous Truth, the wisdom of God, leads only to "right things," ever onward and upward.

"Receive *my* instruction and not silver; and knowledge rather than fine gold. . . . *I* love them that love *me*; and those that seek *me* early shall find *me*. Riches and honor are with *me*; yea, durable riches and righteousness. . . . *I* lead in the way of righteousness: in the midst of the paths of judgment: that *I* may cause those that love *me* to inherit substance; and *I* will fill their treasures."

We are now going to be told of something that has been from everlasting, without beginning of days or end of life.

"The Lord possessed *me* in the beginning of his way, before the works of old. *I* was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the world was."

What, we ask, was set up from everlasting? what has existed and will continue to exist through all eternity? What is the "I," the "me," which the Lord possessed? It is Wisdom, knowledge personified and represented as an individual calling to the sons of men and pleading with them to hearken to the Voice of instruction, to heed these life-giving commandments.

Here lies the identifying feature of Melchisedec. Wisdom is without beginning or end; and Melchisedec likewise has neither father nor mother, beginning of days, nor end of life (Heb. 7:3). Things equal to the same thing are equal to each other. Therefore Wisdom and Melchisedec are parallel terms, both employed to represent the everlasting Truth of the Great Jehovah.

We read further in Proverbs concerning the eternal duration of Wisdom or Melchisedec: "When there were no depths, *I* was brought forth; when there were no fountains abounding with water. Before the mountains were settled, before the hills was *I* brought forth: when as yet he had not made the earth, nor the fields, nor the highest part of the dust of the world. . . . *I* was by him, as one brought up with him; and *I* was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him."

Again in Proverbs 9 Wisdom is personified. We read: "Wisdom hath builded her house, she hath hewn out her seven pillars." What is the house that Wisdom is building? The Apostles will inform us, in Heb. 3:6 and I Peter 2:5, "Christ as a Son over his own house; whose house are we, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end. . . . Ye also as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ." Wisdom is represented as building a spiritual house for the Lord; and indeed, without the law of God (personified as Wisdom or Melchisedec), the house or Church could never be built, all its members perfectly joined together.



More of the beneficent deeds of Wisdom are enumerated, as follows, "She hath killed her beasts; she hath mingled her wine; she hath also furnished her table" (Prov. 9:2). Wisdom has made abundant provision for the spiritual strength of the new man. The Lord's table is richly furnished with the milk and strong meat of the Word, the wine of truth, the bread of heaven, the water of life. The invitation is ever extended, "Come, eat of my bread, and drink of the wine which I have mingled. Forsake the foolish, and live; and go in the way of understanding" (vs. 5, 6). This is the eternal appeal of Wisdom and likewise of Melchisedec: Forsake all that is low, mean and base, and come up higher; "go in the way of understanding."

#### Truth is Called the Word, also Christ

In clear symbolism the law of God is often referred to as the Word, as we read in Psalm 119:9, "Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? by taking heed thereto according to thy word." The Word is the cleansing power, as is also its equivalent—Melchisedec.

This same truth was taught in John 15:3, 7, 10, "Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you. . . . If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you." What are the conditions? "If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love."

How did Jesus abide in the Father's love? By keeping God's commandments, obeying this wonderful word of life which has been from the beginning. Of it we read in Ps. 119:105, 130, 160, "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path. . . . The entrance of thy words giveth light, it giveth understanding unto the simple. . . . Thy word is true from the beginning: and every one of thy righteous judgments endureth for ever." This Word of the Everlasting God is the Melchisedec that was from the beginning.

In I Cor. 10:1, 3, 4 the Apostle Paul gives a most wonderful explanation of this truth: "Moreover, brethren, I would not have you to be ignorant, how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea, . . . and did all eat the same spiritual meat; and did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them, and that Rock was Christ." That Rock was *Petra*, Christ the Truth. This Christ existed from old time, also as Melchisedec.

Seeing that the meat and drink of which our fathers partook was *spiritual meat and drink*, it could have no reference to a literal, personal Christ; but it proves beyond all doubt that the Word of God, the Truth, was and is termed Christ. Apart from the knowledge that the Almighty One is speaking to humanity in *spiritual* terms, there would be no possible way of understanding the Bible. It is as Paul taught in Col. 1:27, "To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; *which is Christ in you*, the hope of glory."

The personal Christ could not be in them, nor could He be in us; but the wisdom of God called "Christ," the words of eternal life, the *spiritual meat* of which we must partake and assimilate in order that we may live forever, was in those believers in ages past and can be in us today. But to the masses this is a mystery, for they think in some mysterious way the personal Christ always existed, and that in order to gain everlasting life we must in some way partake of His literal flesh and blood.

In John 6:52 we find that the question was asked by those who were listening to the Master: "How can this man give us his flesh to eat?" They thought of nothing but the literal. Jesus answered them (v. 63), "It is the Spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life." He had already made clear in verse 27 that it was not the literal but the spiritual that He was presenting to them: "Labor not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of man shall give unto you." That is to say, Make the spiritual the chief aim and object in life.

At another time He stressed this principle in John 4:31—34, when the disciples said to Him, "Master, eat." They had reference to literal food; but He said unto them, "I have meat to eat that ye know not of." Therefore the disciples said to one another: "Hath any man brought him aught to eat?" Their mind was still on the literal food. Jesus said to them, "My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work." What was the nature of the "meat" of which Jesus partook? It was the *spiritual meat* called Christ, the *bread of life*, "every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God," as He told the tempter (Matt. 4:4).

#### "The Word Was Divine"

"The Word was with God, and the Word was divine." This is the correct rendering of John 1:1, as translated by the late Professor Goodspeed of the University of Chicago. In the beginning the Word existed, and that Word was and is divine. "The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him: and without him was not anything made that was made. In him was life; and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not" (verses 2—5, King James Version). This is the same as the Apostle Peter testified, that "all things that pertain unto life and godliness come through the knowledge" of God and obedience to His Word. It is in harmony with Proverbs 8, from which we have already quoted. All of Jehovah's wonderful works are performed by means of this most glorious law of Wisdom.

When the church apostatized, was turned from the Truth of God's Word to fables, as foretold in Dan. 8:12; 7:25 and II Tim. 4:3, 4, the masses accepted the pagan philosophy of Plato and Philo and taught that the Word, the *Logos*, was the literal Christ and had always existed. What was in the beginning? In Dr. Moffatt's translation of John 1:1 we read: "The *Logos* existed in the very beginning, the *Logos* was with God, the *Logos* was divine."

We turn to the Greek Lexicon for the definitions of *Logos*: "The word or outward form by which the inward thought is expressed. . . . A word, and in plural, words, i. e. language, talk . . . a word, (in a fuller sense) a sentence, proposition . . . a saying, statement, a divine revelation . . . maxim, proverb . . . speech, discourse . . . right of speech, power to speak . . . prose-writing, prose . . . the power of the mind which is manifested in speech, reason."

The false teachers never promulgated a greater falsehood than when they proclaimed that *Logos* ever meant an individual, a person. The word has no such definition. In a Scriptural sense it can only mean the wisdom and knowledge of God, which has always existed. The word *Logos* is never once found to refer to a person; it is speech, discourse, and in the Bible sense it is the Word of God, the light that is shining in a dark place.

This is what the Apostle Peter taught when he said in his Second Epistle, 1:19, "We have also a more *sure word of prophecy*; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the daystar arise." The Word of God, the *Logos*, is all we now have to guide our steps in the way of righteousness; and it truly is a light shining in a dark place, for it is all the people of God shall have until Jesus, "the bright and morning star . . . the Sun of righteousness," arises to dispel the gross darkness which now enshrouds the earth (Rev. 22:16; Mal. 4:2; Isa. 60:2).

#### Who is This King of Peace and Righteousness?

After all the evidence which we have reviewed, we should be able to comprehend the Apostle Paul's explanation in Hebrews 7 just who this Melchisedec is. We read: "For this Melchisedec, king of Salem, priest of the most high God, who met Abraham . . . and blessed him. . . ." We shall now give most of the following verse from Dr. Moffatt's translation, as it is somewhat clearer. "This Melchisedec is primarily a *King of righteousness* (such is the meaning of his name); then, besides that, *King of Salem* (which means King of peace)."

Paul said in Heb. 5:11 (Moffatt), "On this point I have a great deal to say, which is hard to make intelligible to you. For you have grown dull of hearing." And so it is today, with the masses.

Now what is the meaning of the word Melchisedec? It is "King of righteousness" and "King of peace." No man is king of righteousness and peace; but the Truth, the Word of God, is that supreme power. If righteousness and peace dominate our hearts and lives, then Melchisedec, King of righteousness and peace, is reigning.

No one need wonder who Melchisedec is, when Paul states plainly that he is "King of righteousness, King of peace," the wonderful Truth which must rule in every heart in order to become worthy of the everlasting glory.

#### How Did Abraham Pay Tithes to Him?

As we have pointed out, Truth is personified, and among its many symbolic terms it is called Melchisedec, a most fitting name, signifying "King of righteousness and King of peace." To this system of Truth, this holy priesthood, Abraham paid a tenth of his goods. As did Abraham of old, the members of the Megiddo Mission have for many years paid a tenth of their income to spread abroad the wonderful Truth of Almighty God, to send the gospel light to those in darkness by means of our publications and through personal contact; to keep THE MEGIDDO MESSAGE in circulation, to send Bible School Lessons, also Junior Lessons, to all parts of this country and abroad, and to support other branches of the mission work. The pastor, choir, organists, band and orchestra gladly devote their time and talent for the advancement of the Truth, the work of Melchisedec in these latter days.

With the understanding that Melchisedec is the Truth of Jehovah, we can readily comprehend that it has neither father nor mother, neither beginning of days nor end of life; for the wisdom of God has always existed, and shall never cease to be. Therefore we can exclaim with the beloved Paul: "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God!"

Melchisedec, this wonderful Wisdom and Truth of the Everlasting God, can be found in the home of each of you, our readers, if only you will let Him in, and a most wonderful Guest He will be, a God-sent Guest to minister truth in your household.

## Musings of the Editor

### Gathering Manna

THE miracles of God's care for Israel during their weary years of wandering in the Wilderness were many; but, one in particular seems outstanding at the moment. This was the miracle of their daily provision of manna. Hunger should certainly have slain that vast horde of people had it not been for the bread which fell from heaven with each new daybreak—save one in seven. On the first day, the second day, the third day, the fourth, fifth and sixth days, manna fell as regularly as the rising of the sun; but the seventh day was the sabbath and no manna was to be found. Israel must prepare in advance by gathering a double portion on the sixth day, or else suffer the pangs of hunger until the morning of a new week should bring its fresh provision.

No less miraculous than the Lord's manner of feeding Israel in the Wilderness is His means of providing spiritual sustenance for His people today. But the time grows short. *Five* thousand-year days have fled into Eternity. Soon dawns the *seventh*, the great Sabbath Rest, the Lord's Day, the Millennium. Ere this *sixth* day is fully spent, we should look well to our larder. Have we gathered a double portion of manna? Alas for those who enter the Sabbath Rest with nothing laid up for the Morrow. Remember, as of old, no manna will fall on the seventh day. Nevertheless, like the Israelites, some shall arise hunger-smitten, their food supply exhausted, and go forth to gather manna. But though they strain their gaze for a single crumb of spiritual bread to appease their excruciating hunger, 'tis all in vain.

Then shall they wail the bitterest of lamentations, "My leanness, my leanness." Then, as the Lord has said, "My servants shall eat, but ye shall be hungry" (Isa. 24:16; 65:13).

Lest we perish of starvation on the Morrow, let us go forth and gather abundant provision today.

#### THE LIGHT OF LIFE

Time moves on relentlessly, changeless.  
The seconds, minutes, hours, pass by beyond recall.  
The tide moves in, and then goes out once more.  
Sunset ends the daily track of vaulted orb across the sky.

Winter's frigid blast is melted by a summer's sun.  
Infancy, youth, old age—and man returns to his long home.

In the never-ending stream of passing time,  
Life at its most is a tiny flicker of candle light.  
So live that when the light of life again is lit,  
'Twill be yours that's lighted then for all eternity.

—Sel.

When nothing seems to help, try looking at a stone-cutter hammering away at his rock, perhaps a hundred times without as much as a crack showing in it. Yet, at the hundred and first blow it will split in two. We may know it was not that last blow that did it, but all that had gone before.



## NOT ABOVE YOUR BUSINESS

THE day was cold and bleak. A tall figure walked down the road, his identity concealed by a coat tightly drawn and a hat pulled down to shield his face from the biting wind. As he approached a group of soldiers who, under the command of a corporal, were building a breastwork of logs, he paused to observe their activities.

The men were tugging at a heavy log; the corporal, important and superior, stood at one side giving orders.

"Up with it!" he cried. "Now altogether! Push! Up with it, I say! Now!" The men gathered new strength. A great push all together, and the log was nearly in its place, but it was too heavy, and just before it reached the top of the pile it slipped and fell back. The corporal shouted again; the log nearly reached the top, slipped, and once more rolled back.

"Heave hard!" ordered the corporal. "One, two, three! Now all together! Push!"

Another struggle, and then, just as the log was about to roll back for the third time, the observer ran forward, pushed with all his great strength, and the log rolled into place on top of the breastwork.

The soldiers' gratitude to their new ally was hearty and spontaneous, but he was intent only upon reprimanding the corporal. "Why don't you help your men with this heavy lifting when they need another hand?" he asked.

"Why don't I?" indignantly. "Don't you see I am a corporal?"

"Indeed!" replied the other, throwing open his great-coat and showing his uniform. "I am only the commander-in-chief. Next time you have a log too heavy for your men to lift, send for me!"

.....

The corporal's name is forgotten. But the name of the other man lives on and on through the years. It is George Washington. And though at that time he was none less than commander-in-chief of the army, yet by this incident he demonstrated that the lowliest duty of the armed forces was not beneath his dignity.

He was not above his business. Great men never are.

It is always men of a lesser sort—like the corporal—who feel themselves superior to the numerous common tasks so vital to the success of every undertaking.

Success in any business or industry can be attained only by always staying down to its level. The instant one gets above his business, that instant its progress is retarded and failure is certain. All who gain honor and wealth in the business world by honest means are never above their business, nor are they too vain to do the floor sweeping or the ditch work if circumstance demands. No part of their business is so lowly as to be despised or neglected by them. They recognize the fact that no necessary work in life can be dishonorable or degrading.

Success in its highest expression is making the best of one's self; it is doing with steadfast, unremitting fidelity the homely duties of everyday life; it follows closely upon an unwavering recognition of the fact that the surest guarantee of advancement is the faithful discharge of the duties of the lower place, the filling of the subordinate position full of honest service.

As in world affairs, so in the King's business: The great characters are those who find no divine decree beneath their dignity to execute, or fulfill, no act of serv-

ice for God and the brotherhood too lowly to perform. No doubt everyone who has started in the King's business has had high hopes of achieving success. But alas! many have failed. Like the corporal, they shun the menial, humble tasks of the King's business, unmindful of the fact that the King Himself was servant to all, and that it is the man faithful in few things who is to be made ruler over many. They are not content to stay in the sphere of action for which they are capable, thus they get above their business—and fail.

It is very important and necessary that we who have been granted the right, down in these closing days, to engage in the King's business, should take a look at the records of past days. The things written aforetime are for our learning, admonition and example (Rom. 15:4; I Cor. 10:11).

We read that Noah, a businessman for God away back in the morning hours of the day of salvation, was "a just man, and perfect in his generation, and Noah walked with God" (Gen. 6:9). Noah was not above his business, though it meant toiling away at the ark day after day for one hundred and twenty years.

Moses was not above his business, though it meant rejecting the splendors and luxuries of Egypt and attaching himself to a race of stiffnecked and ignorant slaves.

Paul was not above his business, though it meant suffering the loss of all things to win Christ. "This one thing I do," he cried to the Gentiles; and he resolutely and steadily refused to be diverted from it. Having this singleness of aim kept him at all times down to the level of his business; he never felt superior to it.

These faithful men left high places of the world to tread with lowliness of heart and a contrite spirit that higher path, the way of righteousness.

The Lord knows our need. It seems that His business is designed primarily to humble us, since naturally we think too highly of self (Rom. 12:3). The heights of honor would be perilous—we wouldn't know how to conduct ourselves modestly up there without first learning to traverse with simple dignity the depths of duty.

The record of our Great Example shows the perfect pattern of one who was not above His business. He "came not to be ministered unto, but to minister" (Mark 10:45). Rather than exalting Himself, He was among His disciples as one that served. It was not beneath His dignity to wash their feet or to cook their meal.

The less spectacular service must be rendered. Though it means treading the lowly path of duty day after day, though it means forfeiting many of the allurements which life might have offered, though it bring no burst of applause, and often no warm smile of approval or word of gratitude, yet the humblest servant will feel amply repaid when in that coming Day the King says, "Friend, come up higher." "For better it is that it be said unto thee, Come up hither; than that thou shouldst be put lower in the presence of the prince" (Prov. 25:7). Then he who has exalted himself above the business of the King shall be abased, but he who has humbled himself to fulfill each duty with steadfast fidelity shall be exalted.

Nothing splendid has ever been achieved except by those who dared believe that something inside them was superior to circumstances.

## THE PICTURE AHEAD

**T**HE world's greatest manufacturers of photo supplies, as an inspiration to their employees, suggest, "Let the life of each of us be the Picture Ahead for everyone to see, a picture with a light that reflects the spirit of the company."

To have no picture inspiring us to look beyond the present, is to belong to the earthworm family, content to crawl through life and die in the same element; but the picture God has placed before us is higher, clear and beautiful. This reward before us inspires us to stand erect, to walk and then to run in the way of His commandments. It raises our desires, stimulates our hope and elevates our ideals to use all God has given us to attain all He can and will give to His faithful few.

The radiant light of those early Christians shone in the face of persecution and death. Their faith was fed and cheered by the picture of that future reward. By eye of faith they viewed a land of unsurpassed beauty, the Holy City with its walls of salvation, a home where sickness, pain and death, evil and destruction are unknown, where eternal peace would bless its inmates; there riches and honor awaited them, and there they could rest from the turmoil of the world. This earth made over new was their inspiration, they could afford to wait till then. This was the picture which lifted them, even as it can lift us, from slaves of the flesh, to become worthy servants of God.

In the world today, those who achieve unusual success in some field of endeavor are rewarded with gifts and praise from the multitude. They present a famous and thrilling picture to be admired by the world at large for a season. But at best life is short and their reward only temporary, as the Psalmist tells us, "Be not afraid when one is made rich, when the glory of his house is increased; for when he dieth he shall carry nothing away: his glory shall not descend after him" (Ps. 49: 16, 17).

The Apostle Paul, with his eloquence and strong personality, could have been a beautiful picture in the eyes of men. No doubt he was tempted in this respect more than once; but did he allow his own mind to dictate? No! He said, "Do I seek to please men? for if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ" (Gal. 1: 10). Instead of fair and flowery speeches, he delved in and exposed the vanity and corruption of the natural mind, bringing to light the hidden craftiness of the old man. His conclusion was, "For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing" (Rom. 7: 18).

While there are many talented ones in the world about us, God picks as His talented ones those humble souls who use their all to serve Him. The Apostle Paul did not enlarge upon the obedient Timothy's abilities, but the rather he said, "Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth" (II Tim. 2: 15). Timothy's greatest talent consisted in serving God to his full capacity in whatever way he could further the work of the Lord. In his wholehearted endeavor he exhibited the picture of a Christian for his fellow men to follow. What better talent could he display? It is in this kind of talent that God takes delight.

There is nothing to compare with the intellectual greatness which can be attained by applying the mind to the knowledge of God. Through the Wise Man we learn, "Wisdom is the principal thing; therefore get wisdom. . . . Exalt her, and she shall promote thee: she shall bring thee to honor when thou dost embrace her. She shall give

to thine head an ornament of grace: a crown of glory shall she deliver to thee. . . . Length of days is in her right hand; and in her left hand riches and honor" (Prov. 4: 7, 8, 9; 3: 16). This picture is truly great.

Christ, our great example and glorious light soon to shine in the new heavens on earth, hands the torch to us with these instructions: "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." Among earthborn His picture has no equal. He fixed His gaze on His Heavenly Father and always did those things which pleased Him. His obedient life even unto death allowed no dark shadows to spoil the picture He left for us.

The things of earth all about us, which are so close and familiar, have tremendous gravity power. It is only by constant and persistent effort that we free ourselves from their attraction and fix our attention on the picture of that glorious future, and the person we must be to make our presence there a reality.

God in His kindness has placed in our hands sixty-six Letters, which show the likeness of both the natural man and the man made over by the power of His Word. Here we find the full instructions how to make the alterations necessary to produce the likeness He desires in us.

Never can we be in that future picture if clothed with any particle of the garment of the flesh. No! "With all this host of witnesses encircling us, we must strip off every handicap, strip off sin with its clinging folds, to run our appointed course steadily, our eyes fixed upon Jesus as the pioneer and perfection of faith" (Heb. 12: 1, 2, Moffatt).

To be a picture worthy for others to follow, those coats of the flesh—anger, impatience, pride, foolishness, jealousy, and their like—must be put off; and in their place put on Truth's robe of righteousness, adorned with kindness, patience, humility and longsuffering.

What a picture of beauty to witness a character which never grows weary in well doing! How is this character gained? There is but one answer: by strengthening the mind with that wisdom which cometh from above, and putting it into practice. This putting into practice requires frequent battles within the precincts of our own nature. Each time we resist the impulses of pride, the darts of jealousy, the impatient spirit, the downward trend of discouragement, we become stronger. This strength increases by exercising unto godliness. All those who attain such a character will be the picture ahead for the nations to emulate in the future.

The beauty of a consecrated life is an example worthy of emulation, as that of "the King's daughter" who possesses that inner beauty of character, all glorious within. She has trained her mind to meditate on Truth, and has become receptive to correction; she is anxious to serve in whatever capacity God requires. Her picture increases in excellence as works of righteousness become greater. Of her the Psalmist says, "So shall the King greatly desire thy beauty: for he is thy Lord; and worship thou him" (Ps. 45: 11). This beauty cultured, attained and maintained is rewarded with an endless life.

It has been said, "It is not the one who walks through life on the smoothest ways who presents the most attractive picture, but the one who can travel the rough and stony paths in such good spirit and cheerful nature that one is tempted to follow on and see what the attraction is." To the true Christian, that attraction is Eternal Life.



### Our Missionary Effort

AS OUR Master said many years ago, "The harvest truly is great, but the laborers are few." But a few, endued with zeal and enthusiasm for the cause of Christ, can, by their efforts, do a work which is both colossal and praiseworthy. This can truly be reported of the Megiddo Mission workers.

This year mission work away from home began when two of our brethren left for the British Isles early in April. During the few crowded weeks they spent there they were busily engaged both in sowing new seed and watering plants already taking root. They left many samples of literature, visited many homes with the message of the Kingdom, and encouraged as many of our readers as they were able to contact. Appreciation for their visit has been received from numerous points.

Since early summer our workers have been in the field almost constantly. Some who are able to spend only a week or two—the vacation they receive from their place of employment—use this time in an endeavor to enlighten someone groping in spiritual darkness, or to strengthen those who are struggling alone, away from constant association of fellow believers.

The New England States have been worked extensively this summer. Several parties have toured these states, leaving sample literature and visiting interested friends. The Maritime Provinces of Canada also were visited, as was also Ontario on numerous occasions.

A party of three has just returned from a visit to the *ecclesia* in Southeastern Iowa. An interesting report was given of the meetings there. These brethren meet regularly each Sunday, some of them traveling as far as fifty miles to be present. They find, as is truly the case, that these weekly meetings are a great stimulant to greater faith. The brethren at Wausau, Wis., were also visited by this party, and also a number of lone friends along the way.

As this goes to press, more mission tours are being planned and more literature is being prepared.

Deserving at least casual mention is the work done throughout the year by our advertising and mailing departments. A record mailing of new books has recently been reported. Through this channel new names are constantly added to our regular mailing list.

And until the day dawns when we shall receive help from above, our workers will continue to go out and our mail shall be forwarded to all points on this globe, carrying the good news of the Kingdom, and giving light and truth to all who seek it.

### AWAKE! FOR THE TIME DRAWETH NIGH

Awake! O ye Christians.

Oh, ever be bright!

The return of our King

Will soon beam to light.

Oh, ever be watchful,

Be not down in the deep!

If our Master returns

Will He find you asleep?

So do your best, Christians,

Keep the prize e'er in view.

When 'tis time to enter His Kingdom

Will you be there too?

—Ethel E. Balewski.

### "THOU SHALT — NOT"

WHAT a wonderful boon can be ours if we follow the Master's example, overcome as He overcame, make our calling and election sure! But mind, it is our best work that God wants, not the dregs of our exhaustion.

If we follow our Pattern we shall be saying, "Not my will, but Thine, O Lord, be done." But alas! Many times our own will gets sadly into the performance of our duties. Shame to us that it should be so, for there is never any need to sin!

We are commanded in the Book of books to have our senses exercised to discern both good and evil, and the Book contains every consideration, every inducement and incentive to do right, as well as cautions, alarms and warnings against doing wrong. Right doing takes us into the strait, narrow way which leads up, ever up the "hill of perfection"; while wrong doing conducts us into the broad, easy way which ends in destruction.

Since we are so prone to evil, that is probably why God gave so many "thou shalt not's." Certainly evil is a legion in which is discord and confusion, while there is harmony and unity in good.

If we live according to the command "thou shalt love" thy Creator, and thy neighbor as thyself, we shall be beyond the need of any "thou shalt not's." But because we do not do this naturally, there must be many "thou shalt not's." However, God will not tempt us above what we are able to bear, and He has wisely balanced things by giving us strength of will with which to overcome our bad traits. So it is imperative that we bend our energy in the right direction: form good habits, practice daily the underlying law of love.

If we make this law our rule of life, we will escape from the "thou shalt not's" and the penalties of their disobedience. We will go forth to meet and conquer the trials of every day, supported and strengthened by faith; till at last when the noise and strife of the battle fades, we shall hear instead the deep and musical sound of the ocean of eternity, and take up the poetic inspiration of the Hebrew king: Surely goodness and mercy have followed me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

### Gems of Thought

Great thoughts reduced to practice become great acts.

"The smallest good deed is better than the grandest good intention."

"The rod and reproof give wisdom: but a child left to himself bringeth his mother to shame."

A man who gives his children habits of industry provides for them better than giving them a fortune.

The human mind is not a deep-freeze for storage but a forge for production; it must be supplied with fuel, fired and properly shaped.

Every time we hold our tongues instead of returning the sharp retort, show patience with another's faults, show a little more love and kindness, we are helping to stock-pile more of these peace-bringing qualities in the world instead of armaments for war.



# Your Questions Answered

BIBLICAL

PERSONAL

CURRENT



Do you have a question? Personal replies will be sent to Biblical questions to any correspondent, and counsel will be offered on problems pertaining to the spiritual life. THE MEGIDDO MESSAGE will publish only the most helpful discussions for the benefit of other readers. No names shall be mentioned.

**Do the Scriptures demand purity of doctrine as essential to salvation? I can't see that this is important so long as a person lives a good life.**

Purity of doctrine is definitely essential to salvation. It is as impossible to build an upright character on false beliefs as it is to build a secure house on an unsound foundation.

This was attempted in the Church at Rome. Certain members introduced doctrinal divisions, but their character suffered. They "which cause divisions and offenses contrary to the doctrine . . . serve not our Lord Jesus Christ" (Rom. 16: 17, 18). In retaining impure doctrine, they forfeited the good life; Paul could not even classify them as servants of Christ.

Repeatedly the Scriptures stress unity in the body, likemindedness, seeing eye to eye, oneness with the Father and Son. None of these requirements can be met by the person who retains false beliefs. In order to *live* the Christ-life, one must first *believe* every principle upon which it is founded. Then and then only can he become pure in heart and clean of hands.

**Jesus said, "Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God." Who are these little children?**

If they were literal children, we might fear a reproduction in the Kingdom of present-day delinquency scenes. But no! The Kingdom is prepared for mature believers, those possessing the intellect and the will power to follow Jesus all the way, those old enough to believe in Him (Matt. 18: 6).

Jesus said that the truths which the wise and prudent of the world scorned were revealed unto babes. Read Luke 10: 21. The contrast here is sharp between two types of mature individuals: Learned and arrogant men look with contempt upon the narrow way of salvation; humble, sincere believers receive God's truth eagerly. They are the "babes," the "little children," for whom the Kingdom is reserved.

**Does the time of trouble spoken of in Matt. 24: 21 and Dan. 12: 1 refer to the same time?**

No. Two times are definitely mentioned. The first reference is identified by the following verse to be the Apostasy when all turned from truth to error and no one was saved. Read Matt. 24: 22.

In Dan. 12: 1 the Prophet is speaking of a time yet future when Michael, the great Prince, shall stand up to deliver His people.

**What should be the Christian's conduct in the matter of our civil laws and ordinances? For example, game hunting out of season if you stand in well with the warden; or speeding on the highway; or exceeding the limit in a day's catch of choice fish. What about the trend—"It's all right if no one is looking"?**

The Christian has one standard of right and he must act from principle and not in the sight of men. If an act

is wrong in the light, it is no less wrong in the dark.

The Bible commands that we be "subject unto . . . the powers that be" (Rom. 13: 1, 2). Law evasion is indeed the trend of the times; but the scrupulous Christian will not be guilty, lest by questionable conduct he bring reproach upon the Cause he professes to uphold. He values his character before God too highly, he guards his reputation before men too jealously, to risk ruin for the indulgence of the moment.

**What were the devils that could talk and ask Jesus to be led into swine, also the unclean spirits that could cry with a loud voice, as referred to frequently in the Gospels?**

"Devil" means "an opposer," in these cases a disease, often mental as opposed to a healthy condition of the mind. Jesus healed by casting out the unclean spirit or the disease.

We read of one such case in Luke 8: 35. After Jesus' healing, the man "sat clothed, and in his right mind," showing it to have been a case of insanity.

**Does the proverb, "The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge," teach that all mankind are condemned for the sins of our first parents?**

Definitely *no*! The Lord condemned Israel for using this proverb, and charged them to use it *no more*. Read Ezekiel 18: 1-3.

The divine principle is, "Everyone shall die for his own iniquity: every man that eateth the sour grape, his teeth shall be set on edge," and "The soul that sinneth, it shall die" (Jer. 31: 30; Ezek. 18: 20). God is just. Never will He require the son to suffer for the father, nor the father for the son.

**Can you suggest a satisfactory method for studying the Scriptures? I have read the Bible through many times, and yet do not possess an adequate understanding of the Word.**

To be understood, the Bible must be studied by subjects. Isaiah supplies the rule: "Precept must be upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, and there a little" (28: 10). No single inspired writer records all the information on any given subject. So, applying the rule, "here a little, and there a little," it must be assembled from the writings of the Prophets, Apostles and Jesus.

Take, for example, the subject of salvation: Study the various texts through the Bible which pertain to salvation, and eventually you will become acquainted with the subject. You will understand how to obtain salvation, when it is to be bestowed, etc.

By employing this method on every subject, the Bible is made understandable to any earnest student.

**What is the meaning of the word "Maranatha" which appears in I Cor. 16: 22?**

*Maranatha* is an Aramaic word, which means, "The Lord is coming." The hope of Maranatha formed the very buttress of the early Church. It was their joy and song amid the leaping flame of persecution. And it remains the living, activating hope of every true believer today. "The Lord is coming!"

# Meditations On the Word

*"He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he that soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully" (II Corinthians 9: 6).*

It is a well-known law of the mind that that which is not expressed dies. Thoughts, ideals, motives, resolutions which enter the mind, if they are not acted upon, if they are not set to action, it is only a matter of time and they vanish from the mind entirely. In secular affairs this is frequently experienced. One may know of sound investment opportunities, but negligence to make the purchase brings no returns. Unusual plans may be developed for a worthwhile project but they shall remain only plans if not put to action. Authors, too, relate that they must put their ideas on paper when they get them, lest they slip into forgetfulness.

So it is in the realm of the spiritual. The need for expression of Christian ideals is unparalleled. The Gospel of Christ, as given to the Apostles and as His people now possess it, is the priceless possession of a few. It ceases to be priceless when we keep it to ourselves. The moment we dislike to share it, or do not share it when we can, we are dead as far as being true Christians is concerned. We have heard the good news, not only for our personal benefit but to tell it to others. We have been healed of our spiritual infirmities to heal; we have been called to call; invited to invite; blessed to bless; helped to help; brought to life (from the dead in sin) to raise others to life; made to see to cause others to see. A man's responsibility does not end when he receives the glad tidings of the gospel. Rather, it begins at that moment. The good news is ours for the purpose of sharing it with others, and the moment someone else shares our faith it means so much more to us.

The Christian Gospel may well be expressed by the four principal words spoken by the angel to the women at Jesus' sepulcher: Come, see, go, tell (Matt. 28: 6, 7). They denote action. The invitation comes and we get the knowledge—we come and see. Then begins our duty—go and tell—and this duty must be a delight to us. It must be strong in us, an impulse difficult to restrain. If we do not possess this impulse, this "go and tell" desire, then the "come and see" experience really has not been ours, or if it was, it has faded away.

Our faith is not one which we can take or leave and nothing happens. It is one which if we do not take to others we lose the very faith itself. Expression of our faith gives strength to our faith; it causes it to grow.

Among the parting words which Jesus spoke to His Apostles are these: "Ye shall be witnesses unto me." Witnesses! The meaning is luminous. Jesus would be on trial before the world, in Jerusalem and elsewhere. Each of His disciples must testify concerning the genuineness of Jesus' life, work, death, and resurrection. Each received his summons then to testify, as before a world court.

In this day we cannot withdraw from the summons. The faith we possess is on trial before the world. Is it true? will it stand? is it of God? If we fail to speak in behalf of Him we join the persecution, for did not Jesus say: "He that is not for me is against me"? Or if called,

suppose we talk indirectly, in two directions, apologetically, indecisively? then we fail to uphold Him. We hinder rather than advance His cause.

A weak or ill-informed advocate can do much damage to a cause he professes to support. While enemies cannot find any direct fault with the cause, they will, nevertheless, ridicule it because of the weak arguments presented. We see the need of preparation in order to bear the message of Christ faithfully to the world.

Paul's words to the Corinthian brethren are noteworthy: "He who gives the seed to the sower" (II Cor. 9: 10, Phillips). The Lord provides seed for the sower, for the one who *uses* it. The more we use the more we will receive; and those who do not put it to use, do not get it. The mind becomes barren through inactivity.

The opportunity for sowing the good seed is ever present. One need not travel to the far shores of earth to do so. Men and women who need converting are everywhere, and those whose faith needs strengthening are always about us. Those to whom we speak a word may not heed it, they may ignore it entirely for the present, but some will hear and reconstruct their lives. In any case, we are the better for having done on our part. We find strength for our own weakness by helping another who is weak; we become kind and compassionate by showing kindness and compassion to others; lovable by loving; and as expressed by the Wise Man: "He that watereth shall be watered also himself."

The great majority of believers are compelled through circumstances to do their sowing at home and in the small circle of their friends and associates. Let no one feel that one's role is insignificant in such a situation. Not all can devote their entire time in mission fields. Men like the Apostle Paul are few. The testimony of our faith by living an upright life is more forceful than we sometimes think.

Whether through our speech or example, the degree of our interest and enthusiasm in the faith we profess is the great determining factor how our lives influence others. We should ever remember that we can never hope to attract others to our cause by showing only feeble interest ourselves. Especially is this true in the home life. Parents who wish their children to take up the Christian way of life cannot for a moment risk doing anything contrary to the ideals of the Master. There can be no exceptions. A let-down in parents' profession only paves the way for children to do the same in their time of testing. One's chances are far better when all precautions are taken at every opportunity; whereas, through neglect the harvest is nothing but heartaches.

And heartaches there will be, for most men have their own dejections and despairs, and the nature of the Christian's efforts is such that opposition is often aroused. When results seem meager it becomes easy, after a lifetime of effort, to pine away in a manner such as this: What have I been spending my life for? Who is the better for all my work? Who is any holier or any happier? Who is less selfish, any less proud, any less envious, any less ill-natured, any less fault-finding? So we are apt to despond and repine when our hopes do not fully materialize. But through all our disappointments come the words of Paul ringing triumphantly, "Let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not"; and, from a more distant past come the strains of melody from the sweet singer of Israel: "They that sow in tears shall reap in joy. He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him."



## ITEMS FROM OUR MAIL BAG

A kind letter has been received from a brother at Onehunga, N. Z.

"Dear Brother: It is a very long time since I wrote to you, but I can assure you that I am constantly thinking of you and of all at the Mission. Brother C—B— sent me a booklet, *The History of the Megiddo Mission*. It was a lovely gesture on his part, and I so deeply appreciated his Christian thoughtfulness. I really did enjoy it very much, and I think what a lovely and peaceful little church you all have, and how I long and wish I had the privilege and opportunity to worship with you all at this lovely little church.

"I humbly give thanks to God that I was led to your Church. I have always been a striver after knowledge of the Truth, and I feel certain, without any shadow of doubt, that I have found the source of God's pure Word, the foundation of Truth at your Mission Church. I have been amazed with all I have learned from your Mission, and I am so pleased and happy to share the wonderful teaching with you all. I have been deeply interested in the articles appearing in the MESSAGE dealing with Genesis, and I trust there will be many more. I read these articles over and over again; they are simply astounding, and a revelation. . . . R—B. L—"

Our brother at St. Charles, Ont., Can., writes again.

"Dear Megiddo Mission: This is to express my feeling of love and gratitude to a merciful God that in His kindness He led me to the Megiddo Church, and also the Megiddo Mission. We are sorry to be so far away from this wondrous Church which has given us the most precious of all, the treasure of the knowledge of God; because 'wisdom is better than rubies; and all the things that may be desired are not to be compared to it' (Prov. 8:11).

"May God grant you all the means to spread far and wide this wonderful wisdom which is able to bring the most happiness to whoever will profit by your preaching, this precious truth which is able to make us free.

"Find enclosed \$2.00 for my subscription to the nice MESSAGE. Yours in the one Faith, C—T—"

From a subscriber at Hartsville, S. C., is a good word.

"Dear Brother Thatcher: I think this is about the third letter we have written to the Mission expressing our gratitude for the MESSAGE and thanking our Heavenly Father for the many wonderful blessings that we have received in reading and studying your literature. . . . We believe you good people have the truth, and we need your help and prayers. We would also like to be a part of the Mission. We are not laden with silver or gold, but we are willing to do God's will with all our might. . . . Your brother in Christ, H—L. S—"

A kind letter is from a brother at Gloversville, N. Y.

"Dear Brother F—: I received your very informative letter regarding the Truth. Truly, how thankful we should be that we have found this saving Truth! I have never found during my lifetime anything that has brought the joy and contentment that this Truth has brought when we allow it to work within us. How unimportant the follies of this world become! What was once attractive becomes abhorrent.

"Cleansing ourselves from these things requires hard work, but it becomes a pleasant work; and the wages offered for this work should cause us to work harder continually. To some of us who have walked for years in darkness, that word *work* becomes of special importance. A brother striving, E—K—"

## OBITUARIES

TIRZAH SMITH

Death is fittingly termed an enemy, but there are times when it assumes a less hostile guise, bringing as it often does release from weary years of suffering. Then it is hailed as almost a friend.

Such was its aspect when it entered our midst on August 5 to claim a sister, Tirzah Smith. Victim of a disease for which medical science offers no cure and but little relief, she had borne her suffering cheerfully and with patient resignation.

Our sister was born in Lewxbury, England, March 1, 1872, the daughter of Edwin and Eliza Phelps Smith.

Younger members of the Megiddo Church had come to respect Miss Smith as one of the few surviving pioneers of the faith. Shortly after the family migrated to America she met the founder of our Mission, the Reverend L. T. Nichols, whose clear reasoning on divine truths and masterful exposition of the Scriptures led her to embrace the faith and thence to become a loyal supporter.

Her sunset years were rich with rarest recollections, for she had served the Nichols family—and that faithfully—for over thirty years. She had embarked with them on the steamship *Megiddo*, which was designed and built by the Rev. Mr. Nichols to further the greatest single missionary enterprise of his life. For more than two years *Megiddo* plied the waters of the Mississippi, Ohio and its tributaries, its ninety gospel mariners heralding the glad tidings of the Kingdom to all who would listen. With the aid of a large tent and a brass band, services were held in many towns and cities.

In 1904 permanent headquarters of the Megiddo Mission were established in Rochester. Here our sister resided for half a century, aiding in all Church activities as long as health permitted.

And now she rests in peaceful sleep. Funeral services were conducted by our pastor, the Reverend Percy J. Thatcher; interment in Mount Hope Cemetery where our beloved dead await the Resurrection Morn.

"We may live in a tent or a cottage,  
And die in seclusion unknown;  
But the Father who seeth in secret,  
Remembers each one of His own.  
We shall shine as the stars of the morning,  
If now we have faithfully run;  
We shall rise to be like Him forever,  
Eternally shine as the sun."

MRS. STUART SPROUT

We have recently received word from her son that Mrs. Stuart Sprout of Sayre, Pa., passed away on June 13. She had been a subscriber for many years. Her son sends a contribution, hoping that someone else may thereby enjoy THE MEGIDDO MESSAGE as much as did his mother.

To all who mourn we extend the Bible comfort that those who sleep in Jesus shall one day rise to share with Him the victory over the grave.

We shall know no sin nor sorrow,  
In that haven of tomorrow,  
When we walk with Christ upon the blessed shore,  
Nevermore with anguish laden,  
We shall reach that blessed haven,  
When the golden bells shall ring for evermore.

## "SHOW ME THY FACE"

Show me Thy face—  
One transient gleam  
Of loveliness divine  
And I shall never think or dream  
Of other love save Thine.  
All lesser lights will darken quite,  
All lower glories wane,  
Compared to that of earth made new,  
With Christ forever reign!

Show me Thy face—  
My faith and love  
Shall henceforth steadfast be,  
And nothing here have power to move  
My soul's serenity.  
My life I will devote to Thee,  
With all I feel and see,  
To serve Thee, blessed Sovereign, Thou  
The One Reality.

Show me Thy face—  
I shall forget  
The weary days of yore;  
The fretting thoughts of vain regret  
Shall haunt my soul no more;  
All doubts and fears for future years  
In quiet rest subside,  
And naught but blest content and calm  
Within my breast reside.

Show me Thy face—  
The heaviest cross  
Will then seem light to bear;  
There will be gain in every loss,  
And peace with every care.  
With such light feet the years will fleet,  
Life seem as brief as blest,  
Till I have laid life's burdens down  
And entered into rest.

Show me Thy face—  
And I shall be  
In heart and mind renewed;  
With wisdom, grace, and energy  
To work Thy work endued.  
Shine clear, though pale, behind the veil,  
Until, the veil removed,  
In perfect glory I behold  
Thy Face, O my Beloved!

—Sel. and alt.



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